

**FY 2022 PERFORMANCE PLAN**

<b>Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)</b>		<b>EID/Public Assistance</b>	Patricia Rivers, x1344 Jessica Crothers, x1332 LaTonya Harris, x1329 LaNette Anderson, x1343 Maria Diaz, x1033
Program Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase SNAP participation rate and amount of SNAP benefits issued to eligible Arlington County residents.</li> </ul>		
Program Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) targets those individuals who are food insecure to the extent that their income and assets are below limits prescribed by Congress for their family size. This benefit supplements the individuals' and families' nutritional needs. SNAP permits low-income households to have a more nutritious diet through normal channels of trade by increasing the food purchasing power for eligible households. The program also provides food in the event of a disaster.</li> <li>In June of State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2022, \$2,239,623 was issued in SNAP benefits, \$557,301 more than in SFY 2021, \$1,054,814 more than SFY 2020 and \$1,642,941 more than SFY 2019.</li> <li>During the COVID-19 pandemic in SFY 2020 and 2021, many residents lost their jobs and thousands of students were mandated to stay at home. The state of Virginia made significant policy changes to manage the influx of SNAP applications and maximum benefits available to residents. Temporary policy changes included waiving initial interviews, delaying SNAP renewals and Interim Review to ensure uninterrupted participation, issuing the maximum benefit allotment to households based on zero income, and issuing separate EBT cards managed by the school system to students eligible for free and reduced lunches. In addition, stimulus payments were issued and not countable in the SNAP budget; and there was a statewide exemption of the work requirement that will continue until the month following the month the public health emergency is declared lifted.</li> <li>In SFY 2022, most temporary policies changes continued; however, staff were required to complete SNAP renewals and Interim Reports each month.</li> <li>Effective July 1, 2021, broad-based categorical eligibility (BBCE) was introduced. The criterion for broad-based categorical eligibility consists of at least one person receiving or authorized to receive a TANF funded service, which benefits the entire household. This includes non-cash or in-kind service funded by TANF. BBCE households 1) income must be at or below 200% of gross income limit and 2) resource test is not applicable. As a result of this policy, we had an increase in expedited SNAP applications by 45%.</li> </ul>		
Service Delivery Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The SNAP program was delivered in a hybrid format in SFY 2022. The Public Assistance Bureau staff provided customer services in the office one day per week.</li> <li>Since the SNAP and TANF interview waivers have been extended, service delivery in FY 2023 should remain the same. Service delivery will be reevaluated should the waivers end, and the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) makes other adjustments to policies.</li> </ul>		
<b>PM1: How much did we do?</b>			
Staff	Total 21.0 FTEs:		

**FY 2022 PERFORMANCE PLAN**

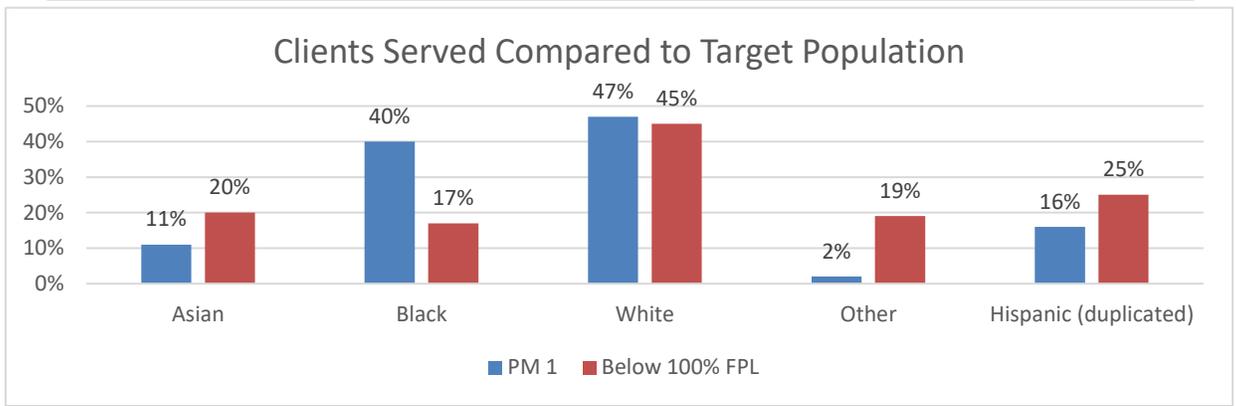
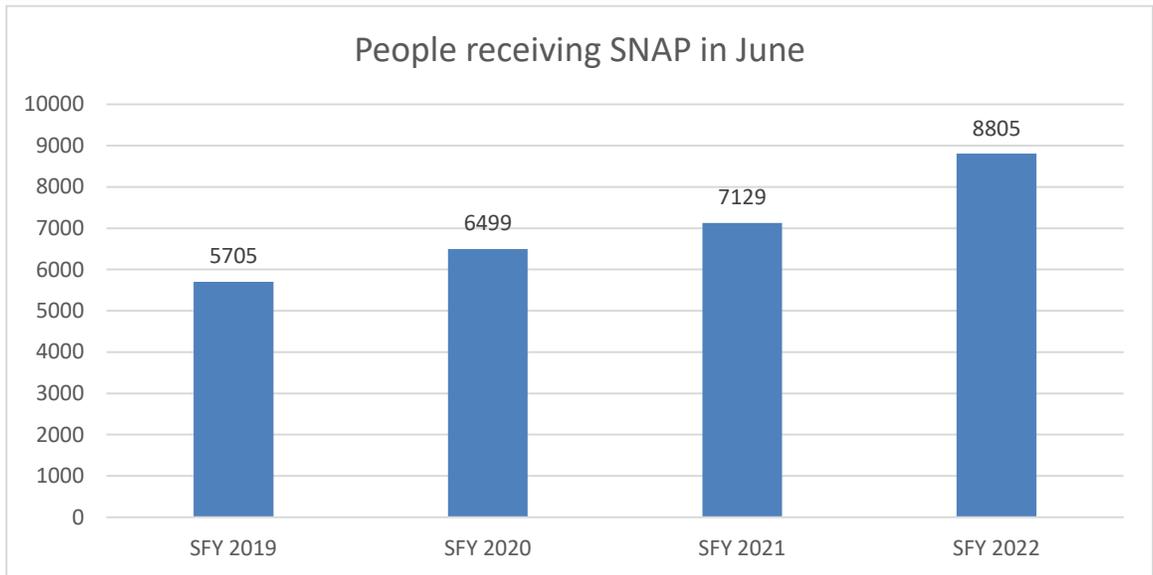
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2.0 FTE Supervisor (50% of 3 Supervisors and 25% of 2 Supervisors)</li> <li>• 1.5 FTE Case Aides (50% of 2 CAs and 25% of 2 CAs)</li> <li>• 17.5 FTEs Benefit Programs Specialists (50% of 34 FTEs and 25% of 4 FTEs)</li> </ul>				
Customers and Service Data		<b>SFY 2019</b>	<b>SFY 2020</b>	<b>SFY 2021</b>	<b>SFY 2022</b>
	Applications	2,329	3,306	3,851	4,299
	People receiving benefits in June of each year	5,705	6,499	7,129	8,805
	Households receiving benefits in June of each year	3,532	4,059	4,280	5,171
<b>PM2: How well did we do it?</b>					
2.1	Application processing timeliness				
2.2	Quality assurance accuracy rate				
<b>PM3: Is anyone better off?</b>					
3.1	Participation rate among eligible Arlington residents				
3.2	Amount of benefits issued and corresponding economic impact				

FY 2022 PERFORMANCE PLAN

SNAP

Measure 1 Clients served

Data



Data Summary

- Between SFY 2019 and SFY 2022, the number of people receiving SNAP in June of each year increased 54%.

What is the story behind the data?

- Program participation continued to increase during SFY 2022 and 2021 due in large part to the COVID-19 pandemic and temporary SNAP policy changes. Temporary policy changes included waiving initial interviews, delaying SNAP renewals and Interim Review to ensure uninterrupted participation, issuing the maximum benefit allotment to households based on zero income, and issuing separate P-EBT cards managed by the school system to students eligible for free and reduced lunches.
- In SFY 2022, participation increased significantly due to the introduction of broad-based categorical eligibility.
- In SFY 2022, SNAP Renewals and Interim Reviews guidance was reinstated to pre-pandemic processing requirements, which had little to no effect on SNAP participation.
- In comparison to the population of Arlington residents with incomes less than the federal poverty level, the program served a higher proportion of Black residents and a lower

**FY 2022 PERFORMANCE PLAN**

proportion of Asian and Hispanic residents. In addition to income requirements, SNAP recipients must meet additional non-financial eligibility guidelines.

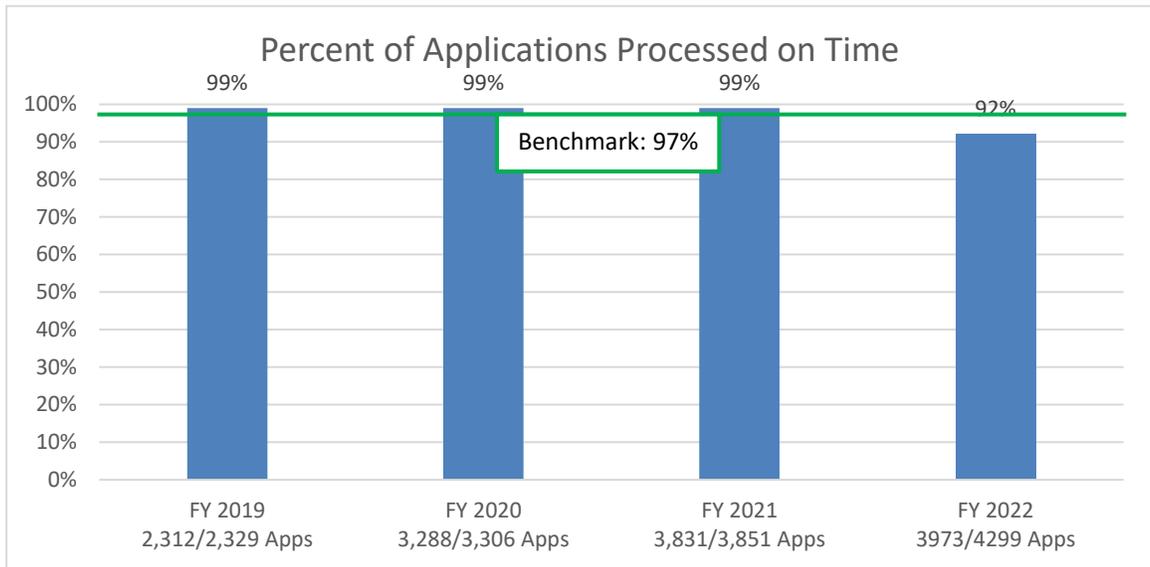
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Target Dates</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue to prioritize staff and resources to meet the SNAP needs for the Arlington community.</li><li>• Seek alternate methods of meeting our staffing needs, including hiring former SNAP staff and retirees to assist with increasing case processing needs.</li><li>• Work with the Food Security Coordinator to target outreach to underserved communities in Arlington.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ongoing</li><li>• SFY 2023 Q3</li><li>• SFY 2023 Q3</li></ul>
<b>Forecast</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In SFY 2023, we anticipate the number of recipients will increase to approximately 9,000 contingent upon the PHE.</li></ul>	

FY 2022 PERFORMANCE PLAN

SNAP

Measure 2.1 Application processing timeliness

Data



Data Summary

- In SFY 2022, 92% of applications were processed in a timely manner.
- Monthly data is obtained from the VDSS Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Application Tracking system, and annual statistics are compiled by program staff.
- In SFY 2022, program staff did not meet the federal target for SNAP compliance of 97%.

What is the story behind the data?

- Federal policy requires applications be processed within 7 days for expedited benefits and within 30 days for non-expedited benefits.
- Compliance had held steady for more than the five previous years. Arlington did not meet the Federal guidelines for timely processing of SNAP applications in SFY 2022.
- Program participation increased throughout SFY 2021 and 2022 due in large part to the COVID-19 pandemic and temporary SNAP policy changes. Temporary policy changes included waiving initial interviews, delaying SNAP renewals and Interim Review to ensure uninterrupted participation, issuing the maximum benefit allotment to households based on zero income, and issuing separate P-EBT cards managed by the school system to students eligible for free and reduced lunches.
- In July 2021, Virginia adopted Broad Based Criteria eligibility (BBCE), which increased expedited applications by over 45%. SNAP income limits increased to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level with no resource evaluation needed, resulting in significant increases in non-expedited applications as well. With no additional staff and 25% staff turnover, it was not possible to process all applications within the required timelines in SFY 2022.
- Effective October 19, 2020, local agencies were given the option to waive all types of interviews (face-to-face or telephonic/initial and reviews), to maximize resources in the face of the influx of requests for assistance. This policy provided greater flexibility for agencies to

**FY 2022 PERFORMANCE PLAN**

allow operational efficiencies; however, the increase in application volume in SFY 2022 offset the effects of these efficiencies.

- USDA required the state to report the number of waived interviews; therefore, LDSSs were required to track and send a weekly report to the home office. Arlington elected to waive most intake and redetermination interviews.
- Effective July 2020, guidance required staff to process SNAP reviews and interim reports as previously done prior to the pandemic.

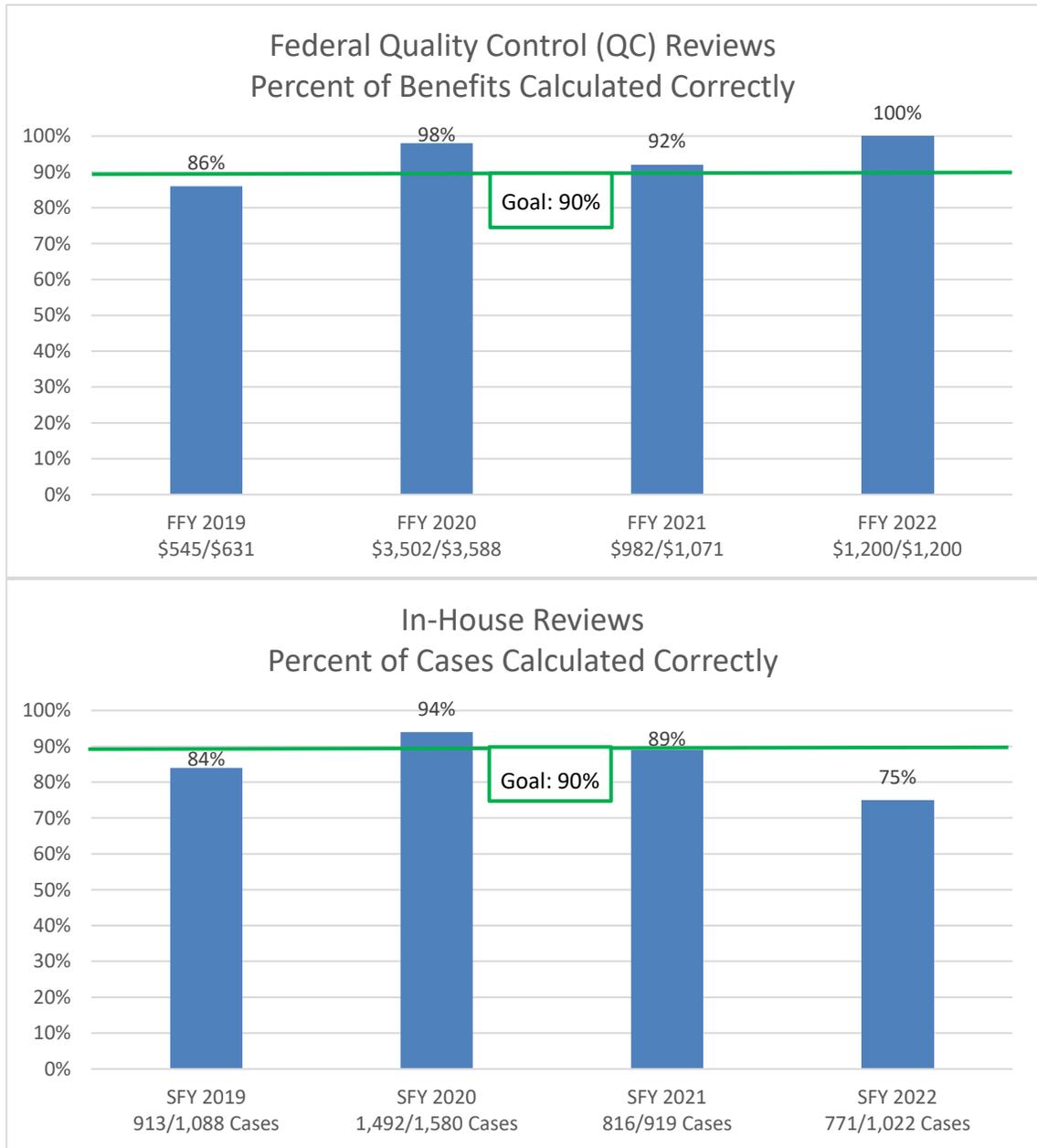
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Target Dates</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue prioritizing tasks and reallocating resources to ensure timeliness standards are met.</li> <li>• Continue to provide weekly pending reports of outstanding applications approaching processing deadlines to workers.</li> <li>• Supervisors will continue to discuss workers' progress/application status at monthly conferences and in the performance evaluations.</li> <li>• Continue to use the tasks and reminders feature in the Virginia Case Management System (VaCMS) to ensure all required case actions are taken in a timely manner.</li> <li>• Staff will continue to inform all applicants about SNAP policy requirements.</li> <li>• Effective SFY 2023, the Bureau has converted one benefit programs specialist position to a full-time training position to ensure we have trained staff to handle applications, reviews, and customer changes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> <li>• SFY 2023 Q1</li> </ul>
<b>Forecast</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In SFY 2023, SNAP application timeliness is projected to be 97%.</li> </ul>	

FY 2022 PERFORMANCE PLAN

SNAP

Measure 2.2 Quality assurance accuracy rate

Data



Data Summary

- In FFY 2022, 100% of the 7 federally reviewed Quality Control SNAP benefits cases were correct with benefits totaling \$1,200. Arlington had no payment errors. Data is obtained from [VDSS SPARK reports](#) and the Quality Control Findings Report provided by the state after an audit.
- In SFY 2022, 75% of cases reviewed in-house by supervisory staff were correct. Supervisors target reviewing 3 cases per worker per month, and all denials and closures. Data is maintained in a spreadsheet.

What is the story behind the data?

**FY 2022 PERFORMANCE PLAN**

- The accuracy goal of 90% for in-house reviews was not met in SFY 2022. The goal for State and Federal Quality Control reviews was met and exceeded in FFY 2022.
- Because federal QC selects such a small amount of benefits to review, program supervisors conduct in-house reviews to ensure quality.
- Federal QC reviews are based on the amount of benefits issued in the cases that are reviewed and issued with correct benefits. The seven cases reviewed issued \$1,200 in total benefits correctly.
- In-house payment accuracy is based on the total number of cases reviewed that are timely, accurate, and have proper coding in the VACMS system. Timeliness and proper computer coding were added to the monitoring process over the past three years. SFY 2022 data includes cases audited by our regional consultants as well.
- The number of cases monitored increased in SFY 2022 due to new staff and an increased number of applications/renewals requiring a review. 95% of our newly hired staff had little to no program knowledge which put an extra responsibility on bureau supervisors to train new staff and monitor more cases.
- Our Benefit Programs Specialists process more than one state/federal eligibility program with numerous program and system changes throughout the fiscal year.

**Recommendations**

**Target Dates**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to review all denials and closures for accuracy monthly.</li> <li>• Continue to monitor three cases per worker per month.</li> <li>• Continue to attend online state-wide and regional training and share this training information in-house with all affected staff at bi-monthly bureau meetings.</li> <li>• With high turnover and higher caseloads, the bureau reallocated resources and created a full-time trainer position effective SFY 2023.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> <li>• SFY 2023 Q1</li> </ul> |
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**Forecast**

- The federal QC accuracy rate will be 97% for FFY 2023. The in-house accuracy rate will be 90% for FY 2023.

FY 2022 PERFORMANCE PLAN

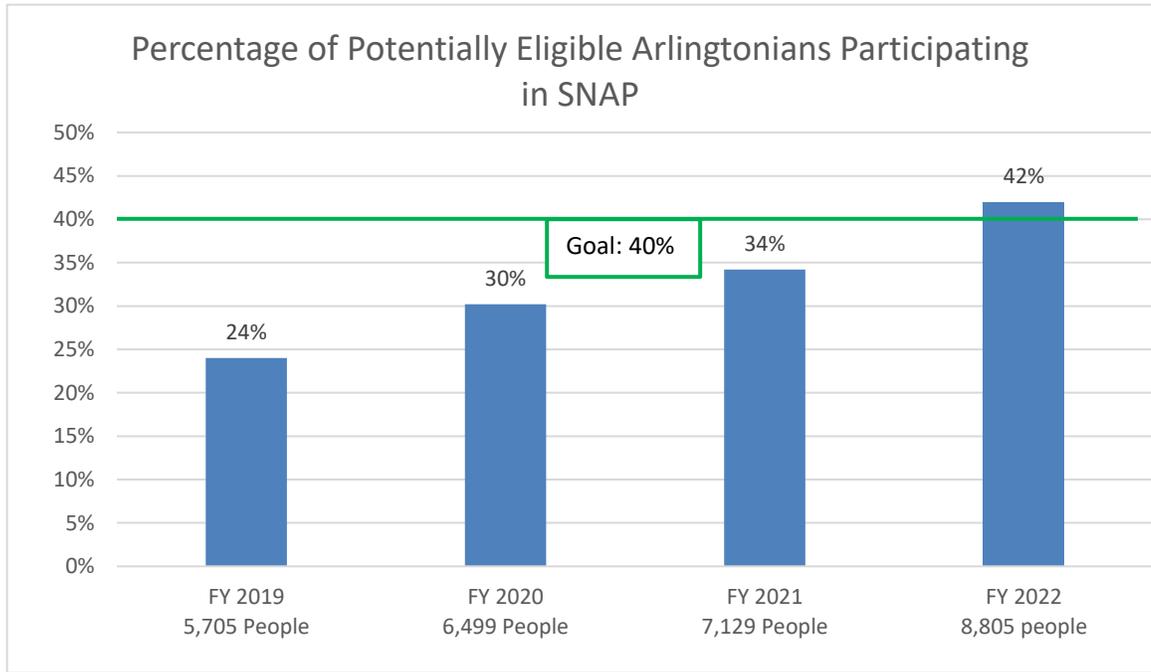
SNAP

Measure

3.1

Participation rate among eligible Arlington residents

Data



Data Summary

- In FY 2022, 42% or 8,805 of all potentially eligible Arlington residents received SNAP benefits. We met our participation rate goal in SFY 2022 for the first time. Potentially eligible Arlington residents are those whose income is at or below 133% of the federal poverty level (FPL), and who meet other criteria. The U.S. Food and Nutrition Service calculates program access based on the number of residents whose income is below 125% FPL, however. According to data from 2020 American Community Survey, 20,183 or 8.7% of Arlington County residents have income at or below 125% of the poverty level; a slight decrease from the previous year.
- In addition to income, a household must also meet residency, citizenship/immigration status, and resource guidelines. The percentage of Arlington residents who also meet these additional criteria is unknown.

What is the story behind the data?

- According to the 2020 American Community Survey, the percentage of Arlington residents meeting the income threshold for SNAP participation is decreasing. In the 2017 survey, 10.6% of residents had income within the limit; now only 8.7% meet the guidelines.
- Because SNAP imposes more stringent guidelines than Medicaid, fewer residents apply for this program. In addition, many qualified immigrants do not apply for SNAP benefits due to beliefs that their children may be required to repay benefits or be barred from attending college, or that they will be prevented from future citizenship consideration. Ongoing customer education and outreach efforts are conducted to address these misunderstandings, as well support of informational legal references/workshops.
- The Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependent Children (ABAWD) provision was waived

**FY 2022 PERFORMANCE PLAN**

during the pandemic in SFY 2021 and SFY 2022, no longer requiring this population be involved in a work activity to receive SNAP benefits.

- In SFY 2022 the number of SNAP applications increased 10%, recipients increased by 24% and households increased by 21%. This increase over the past few years is due mainly to the inclusive measures by the state of Virginia to maintain SNAP eligibility during the pandemic, and the SFY 2022 BBCE policy which allowed applicants with less than 200% of the FPL to qualify.
- In SFY 2021, the program and the Food Security Coordinator conducted onsite outreach and enrollment clinics at local food pantries, homeless shelters, schools, and other sites. In addition, the Food Security Coordinator developed a SNAP Ambassadors program to train community partners to assist residents in applying for SNAP. In SFY 2022 with the coordinator’s support, we reviewed, revamped, and reorganized our client handouts and informational mailings. The coordinator also began attending PAB’s bureau meetings.

<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Target Dates</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to pursue online outreach opportunities as capacity allows to increase number of participants during targeted community events, such as the college student outreach at Northern Virginia Community Center, Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC), the Annual Health and Housing Fair and PathForward (formerly A-SPAN).</li> <li>• Continue to send SNAP applications to Medicaid recipients whose reported income is within the SNAP income guidelines.</li> <li>• Continue to ensure Benefit Programs Specialists and Consultants in the Customer Service Center explain SNAP guidelines during each contact with applicants applying for other programs.</li> <li>• Continue to ensure accuracy of information being disseminated to customers and potential customers regarding the local, state, and federal policies surrounding SNAP.</li> <li>• Continue to stay abreast of immigrant and state policy changes regarding public charge. Actively reference the Immigration Legal Referral List for all recipients requesting closure or denial of SNAP benefits.</li> <li>• Continue to meet with the Food Security Coordinator regularly to discuss possibilities to increase enrollment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>
<b>Forecast</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The percentage of eligible participants will likely increase to approximately 45% in FY 2023, due in part to the continuing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and related policy guidance by the Food and Nutrition Administration.</li> </ul>	

FY 2022 PERFORMANCE PLAN

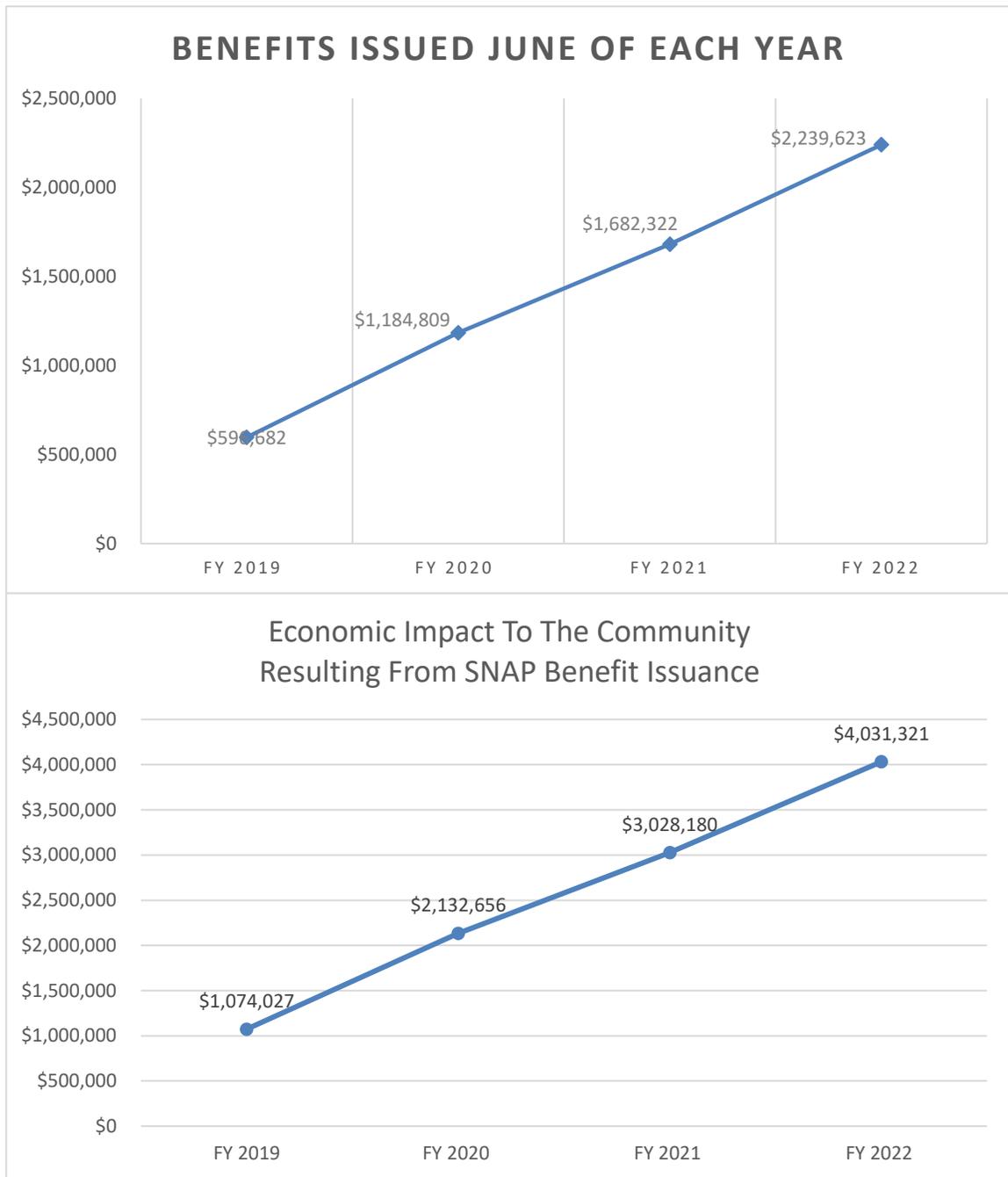
SNAP

Measure

3.2

Amount of benefits issued and corresponding economic impact

Data



Data Summary

- Both the amount of benefits issued, and the economic impact increased in SFY 2022. The economic impact increased over a million dollars over the last year.
- Data is obtained from VDSS FUSION reports.
- According to the [USDA Economic Research Service](#), for each \$5 of SNAP issued, the resulting stimulus to the economy is approximately \$9. An increase in SNAP benefits provides a fiscal stimulus to the economy during an economic downturn. When resources are underemployed, the increase in SNAP benefits starts a

**FY 2022 PERFORMANCE PLAN**

multiplier process in which inter-industry transactions and induced consumption effects lead to an economic impact that is greater than the initial stimulus.

**What is the story behind the data?**

- According to the [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#), SNAP kept 8.4 million people out of poverty in 2015, including 3.8 million children. According to the USDA, SNAP participation for 6 months was associated with a 5-10% decrease in food insecurity, including households with food insecure children. SNAP benefits are considered one of the fastest and most effective forms of economic stimulus according to the [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#).
- Arlington had a 21% increase in the number of households participating in SNAP in FY 2022 – significantly higher than the 5% increase seen in SFY 2021. The increase in recent years in the amount of benefits issued and the corresponding economic impact is due to several factors related to COVID-19: 1) the Food and Nutrition Administration has authorized the maximum benefit amount be issued to each eligible household since the pandemic began in mid-March 2020, 2) SNAP interviews have been waived during the pandemic, meaning if there were no outstanding questions, staff did not interview customers but did request verifications, and 3) the BBCE policy which allowed applicants with less than 200% of the FPL to qualify.

**Recommendations**

**Target Dates**

- Continue targeted comprehensive outreach activities, including working with community partners, WIC program/Public Health Department, public school systems and continue providing SNAP applications to Medicaid recipients at review when reported income appears to meet program income guidelines.
- Continue to ensure Benefit Programs Specialists and Consultants in the Customer Services Center are explaining SNAP guidelines during each contact with applicants applying for other programs.
- Continue to ensure immigrant households understand policies, potential eligibility, and how receiving benefits impacts immigration concerns.

- Ongoing
- Ongoing
- Ongoing

**Forecast**

- In FY 2023, the benefits issued are forecasted to increase to approximately \$2.3M, and the corresponding economic impact to approximately \$4.12M, if the economy remains the same.